

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Alexander Melville Bell and Eliza Symonds Bell, October 11, 1878

Letter written by Alexander Graham Bell to his Parents. 57 West Cromwell Road, S. W., October 11th, 1878. Dear Papa and Mama:

Mrs. Hubbard, Gertrude and Berta left us to-day. They sail from Liverpool tomorrow morning and I send this scrawl in hopes that it may go by the same steamer.

I have taken our passage on board the Allen Line Steamer "Sardinian" leaving Liverpool October 31st. for Quebec. We are booked through to Toronto. If you are at Kingston we shall find you out there on our way to Brantford.

Mabel finds Mary Horne so invaluable in managing her servants — that she wants Mary to come and live with us — doing for us in America what she has done for us here. Although Mary is very feeble and nervous and unable to do any real work — still she is of the greatest possible assistance to Mabel — and I am quite willing to have her with us. Mary herself would be glad to go either to Canada or to Washington with us — were it not for the ocean of which she has a nervous dread. She is in such a weak and nervous condition that I hardly liked to urge the voyage upon her without medical advice. Our doctor saw her yesterday — and gave it as his opinion that weak and nervous as she is she need not fear the voyage — that the complete change of scene and life and climate is just what is calculated to restore her to strength. He says that her condition is entirely the result of worry and anxiety and that the chances are — that — as she is not yet sixty 2 years of age — the change will entirely restore her to her old self — whereas if we leave her here in the ruts of her old life we probably leave her to die. The doctor's verdict has already produced a great change in Mary. She is encouraged — and now looks forward to the voyage with as much hopefulness as dread. When we see you in Canada we can settle whether she will live with us or with you. I doubt whether you would find her anything but a burden —

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for she is not now fit for much work. Whereas she will be invaluable to Mabel even if she does no work at all — beyond forming a medium of communicating with the servants — and keeping an eye on the disposal of the finances.

Our party will consist of myself, Mabel, Elsie and her nurse (Annie Whiting) and Mary Horne. Can you put us all up in Brantford? Or how shall we manage? I want to stay with you until we have settled what I am going to do next and where we are to live.

Your loving son, Alec. Prof. A. Melville Bell, Brantford, Ont.